

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 312028 TOSEC 340072
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ARDAY:TH

APPROVED BY NEA:ADUBS

L - MR. LEIGH

/S: PSEBASTIAN

S:HCOLLUMS

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 312028 TOSEC 340072

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM L:LEIGH AND NEA:DUBS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, EG

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: SADAT LETTER TO PRESIDENT
FORD ON ISRAELI OIL EXPLORATION IN GULF OF SUEZ
(S/S NO.7626172)

1. BEFORE YOU LEFT WASHINGTON YOU RETURNED THE ATHERTON/
LEIGH MEMORANDUM ON THIS SUBJECT, SAYING THAT THE DRAFT
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO SADAT WAS PATRONIZING IN TONE
AND ASKING TO DISCUSS IT. WE HAVE REWORKED THE LETTER TO
ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM AND ARE RESUBMITTING IT
WITH THE THOUGHT THAT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO APPROVE IT
WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION.
2. THE SAME MEMORANDUM RECOMMENDED THAT YOU RAISE THE SUB-
JECT OF ISRAELI OIL EXPLORATION IN THE GULF WITH DINITZ,
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REITERATING OUR OPPOSITION AND HANDING HIM A COPY OF OUR
LEGAL MEMORANDUM ON THE SUBJECT. (THE ISRAELIS HAVE ASKED
IN WRITING FOR THIS MEMORANDUM AND OUR FAILURE SO FAR TO
PROVIDE IT MAY WELL HAVE GIVEN THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT WE
ARE UNSURE OF OUR LEGAL POSITION.) IT IS PARTICULARLY THIS
RECOMMEDED DISCUSSION WITH DINITZ TO WHICH WE REFER IN THE

DRAFT LETTER TO SADAT WHEN WE PROPOSE THAT THE PRESIDENT
ASSURE HIM THAT WE WILL MAKE CLEAR TO ISRAEL OUR BELIEF
THAT ITS OIL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY

ARE DETRIMENTAL TO THE PEACE PROCESS.

3. THE DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO SADAT IS AS
FOLLOWS: BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I APPRECIATE YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 23, EXPRESSING YOUR
CONCERN ABOUT THE INTENTIONS OF ISRAEL TO EXPLORE FOR OIL
IN THE PORTION OF THE GULF OF SUEZ OVER WHICH ISRAEL
ASSERTS CONTROL. IT IS A CONCERN THAT WE SHARE. THERE
IS NO DOUBT IN OUR MINDS THAT SUCH ACTIVITY IS CONTRARY
TO INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PRACTICE, AND WE HAVE MADE OUR
LEGAL POSITION KNOWN DIRECTLY TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.
WE HAVE, MOREOVER, RESPONDED IN THE SAME VEIN TO
INQUIRIES FROM AMERICAN FIRMS THAT HAD BEEN CONSIDERING
PARTICIPATION IN SUCH ACTIVITIES. I BELIEVE THIS HAS HAD
THE EFFECT OF DETERRING SUCH PARTICIPATION ON THE PART OF
SOME FIRMS AND SLOWING THE PACE OF ISRAELI ACTIVITIES IN
THE GULF. WE INTEND TO TAKE UP THIS ISSUE WITH ISRAEL
AGAIN AND TO REITERATE OUR OPPOSITION TO ITS CONTINUING
EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES AND OUR VIEW OF THE POTENTIAL
CONSEQUENCES. WE ALSO WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE ANY
INVOLVEMENT BY AMERICAN FIRMS IN THESE ACTIVITIES.

IN APPROACHING THIS ISSUE, WE HAVE ALSO TRIED TO SEE IT
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IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF OUR ULTIMATE GOAL OF A GENERAL
SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. I HOPE YOU WILL
AGREE THAT THIS IS IMPORTANT. WE CANNOT IGNORE IMMEDIATE
PROBLEMS SUCH AS ISRAELI OIL EXPLORATION IN THE GULF, BUT
AT THE SAME TIME IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT PEACE IS ULTIMATELY
THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE MANY POINTS OF CONTENTION BETWEEN
THE ARABS AND ISRAEL. I BELIEVE THERE IS NOW A GREATER
DESIRE FOR PEACE AMONG ALL THE PARTIES THAN AT ANY TIME
IN THE LONG AND TRAGIC HISTORY OF THIS CONFLICT.

THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO ACT WITH VIGOR AND
DETERMINATION TO PROMOTE AND HASTEN THIS PROCESS. WE
WILL ALSO, I ASSURE YOU, AGAIN STRESS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
ISRAEL OUR BELIEF THAT ITS OIL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES IN
OCCUPIED TERRITORY ARE DISRUPTIVE OF THIS PROCESS AND
DETRIMENTAL TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PEACE THAT IS SO
IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US.

YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT HAVE DEALT WITH THIS PROBLEM WITH
GREAT RESTRAINT, AND I HOPE SINCERELY THAT IT CAN BE
RESOLVED SATISFACTORILY.

SINCERELY, GERALD R. FORD. END TEXT.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) THAT YOU APPROVE THE LETTER TO
SADAT FROM THE PRESIDENT AND AUTHORIZE US TO TRANSMIT IT
TO THE WHITE HOUSE.
APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

(2) THAT YOU AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO SPEAK TO DINITZ ON
THIS SUBJECT, HANDING HIM OUR LEGAL MEMORANDUM. IF YOU
AGREE, WE WILL PREPARE TALKING POINTS AND RESUBMIT THE
LEGAL MEMORANDUM TO YOU ON YOUR RETURN TO WASHINGTON.
APPROVE DISAPPROVE.....

5. DRAFTED: NEA:ARLAY
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APPROVED: NEA:MR. DUBS
CLEARED: L:MR. LEIGH, S/S:
S:HCOLLUMS

ROBINSON

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NNN

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